

Message Text

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41

ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ARA-06 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 IO-13 FEA-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 COME-00

INT-05 TRSE-00 NSF-01 DOTE-00 CG-00 EPA-01 CEQ-01

OIC-02 /117 W

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P R 101110Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2864

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION USUN

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 20194

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: XV, TGEN, PLOS

SUBJ: ANTARCTIC SPECIAL PREPARATORY MEETING: SCIENTIFIC
AND TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP SECOND WEEK AND FINAL
SUMMARY

REF: PARIS 19737

1. SUMMARY. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP
RECOMMENDED EXPERTS MEETING BE HELD TO DEAL WITH
TECHNOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IF
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RESOURCE ACTIVITY UNDERTAKEN. US TABLED PAPERS ON

ANTARCTIC MINERAL RESOURCES AND ON TECHNOLOGY. GROUP CONCLUDED EXPLOITABLE MINERALS MAY EXIST BUT TIME FRAME FOR EXPLOITATION UNCLEAR. END SUMMARY.

2. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP BEGAN THE SECOND WEEK WITH CONSIDERATION OF AN ARGENTINE PROPOSAL SIMILAR TO EARLIER AUSTRALIAN PROPOSAL, SUGGESTING GOVERNMENTS CONSIDER CONVENING MEETING OF EXPERTS TO PLAN FOR ADOPTION OF AGREED MEASURES TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT FROM THE EFFECTS OF POSSIBLE RESOURCE ACTIVITIES. ARGENTINE DELEGATE INDICATED THAT ARGENTINE MIGHT HOST THIS MEETING. MOST DELEGATIONS CONSIDERED A MEETING PREMATURE BECAUSE OF LACK OF INFORMATION CONCERNING EXPLORATION, EXPLOITATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TECHNOLOGY THAT MIGHT BE USED IN THE ANTARCTIC, AS WELL AS LACK OF OTHER ESSENTIAL SCIENTIFIC DATA.

3. A FIVE-COUNTRY WORKING PAPER (UK, AUSTRALIA, BELGIUM NORWAY AND US) WAS INTRODUCED BY UK RECOMMENDING THAT A MEETING OF EXPERS BE CONVENED TO DISCUSS A DETAILED LIST OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ISSUES RELATED TO EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION. SOVIETS, ALTHOUGH AGREEING TO THE NEED FOR MORE TECHNOLOGICAL INFORMATION, STRONGLY OPPOSED CONVENING ANY MEETING OF EXPERTS PRIOR TO NINTH CONSULTATIVE MEETING. AFTER PROTRACTED NEGOTIATION SOVIET DELEGATE AGREED TO COMPROMISE TEXT SUGGESTING GOVERNMENTS CONSIDER THE POSSIBLITY OF BRINGING EXPERS TO THE NINTH CONSULTATIVE MEETING TO EXAMINE AND REPORT ON TECHNOLOGICAL QUESTION. A DETAILED OUTLINE FOR THIS EXAMINATION WOULD BE PROVIDED IN ADVANCE.

4. NORWEGIAN REPRESENTATIVE (SOLLIE) STATED INFORMALLY THAT HE WAS INTERESTED IN HOSTING A PRIVATE MEETING ON THE TECHNOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF MINERAL RESOURCES ACTIVITIES IN POLAR AREAS AT NANSEN FOUNDATION SOMETIME EARLY NEXT YEAR. EXPERTS FROM QUALIFIED STATES (EXCLUDING SOME ANTARCTIC TREATY POWERS AND INCLUDING OTHERS SUCH AS CANADA) WOULD BE INVITED.

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5. US TABLED PAPER GIVING GEOLOGIC AND ECONOMIC APPRAISAL OF ANTARCTIC MINERAL RESOURCES, WHICH WAS NOT DISCUSSED FOR LACK OF BOTH TIME AND QUALIFIED EXPERTS AND DISTRIBUTED INFORMALLY EXCERPTS FROM US AND FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS DESCRIBING CURRENT TECHNOLOGY POSSIBLY ADAPTABLE TO ANTARCTIC OFFSHORE RESOURCE OPERATIONS.

6. WORKING GROUP'S FINAL REPORT REFLECTED GENERAL VIEW

THAT MINERAL RESOURCES EXIST, WITH SOME EMPHASIS PLACED ON POTENTIAL OFFSHORE HYDROCARBONS, THOUGH WHETHER THEIR EXPLOITATION WOULD OCCUR, AND IF SO WHEN, NOT DETERMINABLE. FINAL REPORT INCORPORATED REPORT TO SCAR AS A RESULT OF CONSIDERATION OF SCAR CIRCULAR 349 (REFTEL) AND COMPROMISE TEXT ON EXAMINATION OF TECHNOLOGICAL QUESTIONS IN CONJUNCTION WITH NINTH CONSULTATIVE MEETING (PARA 3 ABOVE). SOVIETS, HOWEVER, RAISED LAST MINUTE OBJECTION TO LATTER TEXT, RENEGING ON COMPROMISE. AFTER PROTRACTED DISCUSSION, WORKING GROUP APPROVED REPORT WITH ORIGINAL COMPROMISE TEXT, BUT ON UNDERSTANDING THAT SOVIETS WERE NOT PREJUDICED FROM RAISING ISSUE IN PLENARY CONSIDERATION OF WORKING GROUP REPORT.

7. COMMENT: US TACTICS WERE TO PRESENT FACTUAL ASSESSMENTS OF PORSPECTS FOR AND LIKELY RESULTS OF ANTARCTIC MINERAL RESOURCES EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION, AND TO ENCOURAGE MOVING AHEAD ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL STUDIES WHILE INSURING THAT MOTION TOWARD POLITICAL SETTLEMENT NOT PREJUDICED. THIS FOUND BROAD SUPPORT EXCEPT FROM SOVIETS, WHO ARGUED THAT MINERAL ACTIVITIES, AT LEAST FOR HYDROCARBONS, WERE INCOMPATIBLE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FOR FORSEEABLE FUTURE. SOVIETS REPEATEDLY SOUGHT TO CHARGE SCAR WITH ALL ENVIRONMENTAL TASKS, THOUGH PRIVATELY ADMITTING ITS LIMITATIONS. EXCEPT FOR SOME JAPANESE SUPPORT, SOVIETS VIEWS WERE NOT SUPPORTED. SOVIET BEHAVIOR OFTEN OBSTRUCTIONIST AND EXTREME, PROBABLY REFLECTING COMBINATION OF INFLEXIBLE INSTRUCTIONS AND PERSONALITY OF WORKING GROUP REPRESENTATIVE. MOST OTHER DELEGATION REFLECTED ACCEPTANCE OF EVENTUAL MINERAL EXPLORATION AND ATTITUDE THAT WORK
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SHOULD PROCEED RAPIDLY.
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